

# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

## U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir Directorate of Installation Support Regional Community Support Center Master Plan Revision

**Description of Proposed Action:** The Proposed Action is to revise the existing RCSC Area Development Plan prepared in 1993 to reflect both continuing and newly evolving community support needs identified by Fort Belvoir. The revision of the RCSC Subarea Plan would authorize the future siting and design of two facilities—a new DeWitt Army Community Hospital and a new Soldier Support Center within the RCSC. The revised plan would also modify land use designations within the RCSC to accommodate future facility siting. The hospital facility would include an estimated 418,000 square feet of building space accompanied by approximately 327,000 square feet of surface parking. The proposed Soldier Support Center would be located on the west side of Woodlawn Road south of the chapel currently under design. The Soldier Support Center is envisioned as a 68,724 square foot facility with an accompanying surface parking area of 107,624 square feet. Projects associated with the Proposed Action would increase lot coverage from approximately 23 percent to 50 percent, allowing for increased impervious surfaces at total build out. The RCSC Subarea Master Plan Revision also addresses the specific scope of a Phase II expansion of the PX. The Phase II PX expansion would include a 137,392 square foot addition and surface and structured parking facilities to accommodate a total of 1,470 vehicles. The proposed PX expansion would accommodate relocation of the Home and Garden Store and the Clothing Store from the South Post.

**Alternative:** The No-Action Alternative was the only alternative evaluated. This alternative would not change the existing 1993 RCSC Area Development Plan. Only remaining projects addressed in that plan and documented in the accompanying 1996 Environmental Assessment (EA) would be authorized for design and eventual construction within the RCSC. There would be no land use changes to accommodate a new hospital or a Soldier Support Center within the RCSC. The Phase II PX expansion was addressed in the 1993 Plan, but it was not evaluated in the 1996 EA.

**Environmental Consequences:** The Environmental Assessment (EA) identified potential impacts of the Proposed Action and mitigation measures to reduce effects on human health and the environment. Individual environmental documentation would be required for each specific project discussed programmatically in the revision of the RCSC Sub-area Master Plan. Impacts and mitigation related to key resource areas are as follows:

- **Land Use:** The Proposed Action would result in several land use changes within the RCSC. A 24.5-acre area of Community Facilities land north of the existing PX would be redesignated to Medical land use. Additional Community Facilities land in the northeast and northwest corners of the RCSC along with Community Facilities land adjacent to Woodlawn Run south of Gorgas Road would be redesignated as Environmentally Sensitive land use.
- **Air Quality:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would result in emissions below the air conformity de minimus levels, however, they will exceed New Source Review (NSR) permit levels. Impacts will be mitigated by utilizing Lowest Achievable Emission Rate (LAER) technology for all new stationary sources.
- **Surface Water:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would result in moderate to major increases in quantity and decreases in quality of storm water runoff resulting in impacts to aquatic systems on site and downstream. Impacts would be mitigated using permanently installed Best Management Practices such as retention/detention basins, grassy swales, groundwater recharge systems, bioretention basins, etc. and by maintaining a 75-foot-wide (extending out from top of bank) vegetative buffer along both sides of all intermittent and perennial streams and drainages.

- **Transportation:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action will create local changes in on-post traffic patterns and would increase local traffic congestion in the immediate vicinity of the RCSC. Installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Gorgas Road and Gunston Road would maintain an acceptable level of service (LOS) at this intersection. Adequate LOS at other signalized intersections around the RCSC would continue through 2007. Changes within the RCSC would have a minor impact on regional traffic.
- **Aquatic Resources:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would result in moderate to major increases in in-stream erosion and siltation within the Mason Run watershed. There would also be increased storm water volume within the Mason Run watershed and higher pollutant loads in storm water resulting from increased impervious surface area used for vehicle parking and roadways. Impacts to aquatic resources would be mitigated by repairing and maintaining existing storm water detention, infiltration, and runoff facilities; requiring all new facilities to have a detailed and approved storm water management plan; and establishing and maintaining riparian forest buffers.
- **Wetlands:** Future projects would result in minor to moderate impacts to wetlands due to fill and changes in drainage patterns. There is a potential loss of a state-rare acidic seepage swamp. Impacts to wetlands would be avoided to the maximum extent possible and mitigated through new wetlands creation or existing wetlands improvements as determined and required through the permitting process.
- **Vegetation:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would result in the removal of a number of acres of native second and third-growth forestland – particularly in the northern portion of the RCSC re-designated for Medical land use. Mitigative actions would include a 2 for 1 replacement of all cut trees measuring more than four inches in diameter at breast height. Planting of replacement trees on Fort Belvoir would need to be determined on a project-by-project basis as part of individual NEPA document development. Environmentally sensitive siting of facilities would be necessary to save as many existing trees (and the associated deciduous forest ecosystem) as possible. Additionally, landscaping should be accomplished using native tree species.
- **Wildlife:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would result in the direct loss of wildlife habitat in direct proportion to the amount of forestland and other undeveloped land lost to development. Additionally, indirect effects would occur from wildlife habitat fragmentation and increased “edge” exposure of interior forest-dwelling bird species. Mitigation would be associated with mitigative measures described for vegetation.
- **Cultural Resources:** The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has determined that there would be no effect on historic properties or other cultural resources resulting from projects discussed in the Proposed Action.
- **Recreational Resources:** Future projects authorized for siting within the RCSC by the Proposed Action would eliminate the current RCSC area north of the PX used for camping by the Boy Scouts of America. The loss of forestland would also reduce the amount of area on Fort Belvoir available for non-consumptive outdoor recreation such as bird watching, nature photography, etc. The character of the existing natural areas within the RCSC bordering the hiking/biking trails would also be changed with additional facilities sited nearby. Fort Belvoir has agreed to identify a replacement primitive camping area for scout use. There would be a loss of bow hunting area.

**Conclusions:** On reviewing the environmental assessment and other project information, the Commander of the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir has concluded that the Proposed Action will not have significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the natural or human environment. Fort Belvoir will ensure that the necessary mitigation measures are implemented. Because no significant environmental impacts will result from implementing the Proposed Action, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

**Notice of Availability:** This Environmental Assessment is available for public review at the Directorate of Installation Support, Fort Belvoir, Virginia and at John Marshall, Lorton, and Sherwood Hall branches of the Fairfax County Public Libraries. A copy of this notice and the Environmental Assessment can be viewed on the Worldwide Web at [www.belvoir.army.mil](http://www.belvoir.army.mil).

Interested parties are invited to submit written comments for consideration on or before 30 days after publication of this notice to Commander, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, 9430 Jackson Loop, Suite 107, ATTN: ANFB-ELE, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5130. E-mail comments will be accepted at [environmental@belvoir.army.mil](mailto:environmental@belvoir.army.mil). The Proposed Action will not be implemented before this date. For more information, contact Mr. Patrick M. McLaughlin at 703.806.3193.